

Failed Prophecies of Joseph Smith

Is there a possibility that there was not something quite right about the narrative that has been given us about how Joseph Smith was the second greatest person in history next to the Savior (see D&C 135)?

Personally, I am extremely grateful Joseph Smith had the faith to part the veil and EVENTUALLY have the repentance to translate the Book of Mormon. Anything beyond that he assumed or pretended to have a gift from the Lord.

1) *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,*

2) *And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, **Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;** (see King Follet Discourse and Mosiah 15:1-5)*

3) *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: **for the LORD your God proveth you**, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

4) *Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.*

5) *And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, **shall be put to death;** (see D&C 135) because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee. (Deuteronomy 13)*

Prophecy # 1 – The Coming of the Lord

President Smith then stated that the meeting had been called, because God had commanded it; and it was made known to him by vision and by the Holy Spirit... it was the will of God that they should be ordained to the ministry and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, for the coming of the Lord, which was nigh – even fifty six years should wind up the scene. (History of the Church, Vol. 2, page 182).

This prophecy was spoken by Joseph Smith in 1835, and recorded by Oliver Cowdery. The fifty-six years were passed by 1891.

Prophecy # 2 – David W. Patten to go on a mission

Verily, thus saith the Lord: It is wisdom in my servant David W. Patten, that he settle up all his

business as soon as he possibly can, and make a disposition of his merchandise, that he may perform a mission unto me next spring, in company with others, even twelve including himself, to testify of my name and bear glad tidings unto the world. (Doctrine & Covenants 114:1)

This prophecy was made on April 17, 1838. David W. Patten died in October of 1838 and thus never went on a mission the following spring.

Prophecy # 3 – The United States Government to be overthrown in a few years

I prophecy in the name of the Lord God of Israel, unless the United States redress the wrongs committed upon the Saints in the state of Missouri and punish the crimes committed by her officers that in a few years the government will be utterly overthrown and wasted, and there will not be so much as a potsherd left for their wickedness in permitting the murder of men, women and children, and the wholesale plunder and extermination of thousands of her citizens to go unpunished (History of the Church, Vol. 5, page 394).

Joseph Smith made this prophecy in May 6, 1843. However, the United States Government did not redress any of the wrongs committed against the Mormons in Missouri, and now over 150 years later, the U.S. Government still stands.

Prophecy # 4 – Congress to be broken up as a government

While discussing the petition to Congress, I prophesied, by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, they shall be broken up as a government, and God shall damn them, and there shall be nothing left of them - not even a grease spot. (Millennial Star, Vol. 22, p. 455. See also History of the Church (HC), vol. 6, p. 116, though when this prediction was incorporated into the official history, Mormon Church leaders decided to leave out the "grease spot" part.)

The petition was not heard nor was protection granted (Deseret News, Vol. 1, p. 59). Yet, Congress was never broken up and continues to function to this day. It is interesting that the compilers of History of the Church, added an editorial note in an attempt to soften or explain this prophecy. They state that: "This prediction doubtless has reference to the party in power; to the 'government' considered as the administration;" (note, p. 116). According to the note in HC, this means the Democratic Party, which was in control at the time. However, the prediction is that "Congress shall be broken up as a government" and Congress is made up of representatives from both parties. The Saints were making an appeal to the General Government, not to the Democratic Party, a point made by a summary statement in the left margin beside this prophecy as it is recorded in HC.

Prophecy #5 – Finding Treasure in Salem, Massachusetts

This prophecy is recorded in Doctrine & Covenants Section 111. The introduction to this prophecy, found at the beginning of Section 111 states:

Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Salem, Massachusetts, August 6,

1836. HC 2:465-466. At this time the leaders of the [LDS] Church were heavily in debt due to their labors in the ministry.

1. I, the Lord your God, am not displeased with your coming this journey, notwithstanding your follies.

2. I have much treasure in this city for you, for the benefit of Zion, and many people in this city, whom I will gather out in due time for the benefit of Zion, through your instrumentality.

3. Therefore, it is expedient that you should form acquaintance with men in this city, as you shall be led, and as it shall be given you.

4. And it shall come to pass in due time that I will give this city into your hands, that you shall have power over it, insomuch that they shall not discover your secret parts; and its wealth pertaining to gold and silver shall be yours.

5. Concern not yourselves about your debts, for I will give you power to pay them.

No treasure was ever discovered, nor did Salem ever fall into the hands of the Mormons.

Prophecy #6 – Pestilence, Hail, Famine & Earthquake to Destroy the Wicked

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellow-men than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled (History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 315-316).

Such a widespread destruction of the wicked of that generation never occurred.

Prophecy # 7 – Temple to be Built in Zion, Missouri

This prophecy comes directly from Doctrine & Covenants Section 84, the introduction of which states:

Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 22 and 23, 1832. HC 1:286-295.

1. A revelation of Jesus Christ unto his servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and six elders, as they united their hearts and lifted their voices on high.
2. Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem.
3. Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased.
4. Verily, this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation.
5. For verily this generation shall not all pass away until a house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house.

The Mormons were forced to flee Missouri due to persecution and a temple was never built on the "temple lot" in the lifetime of Joseph Smith or within the generation of his contemporaries. (Borrowed from <https://mit.irr.org/failed-prophecies-of-joseph-smith>)

Let's not forget a few other things like the revelation to go to Toronto to find a person eager to buy the copyright of the Book of Mormon. Also, a careful investigation into the non-apologetic version of the Kinderhook Plates fiasco, etc., etc.